

VZCZCXRO6204
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHCO #0314 1501831
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 291831Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0345
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS COTONOU 000314

SIPDIS

DOL FOR ILAB/RRIGBY AND DGARMS
STATE FOR AF/W DANA BANKS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [EIND](#) [ETRD](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [EAID](#) [BN](#)

SUBJECT: BENIN: FORCED LABOR AND CHILD LABOR IN THE PRODUCTION OF
GOODS

REF: (A) Garms - Hahn Email 05/08/2008 (B) STATE 43120

¶1. This cable responds to reftel requests for information on Forced
Labor and Child Labor in the production of goods.

Rocks and Mineral Goods

¶2. According to Norbert Fanou Ako, Director of the the NGO ESAM,
"Enfants Solidaires d'Afrique et du Monde", Solidarity with the
Children of Africa and the World, children are used to mine gold in
Perma, a small village located in Northwestern Benin. These children
come from Benin as well as from countries neighboring Benin
including, Burkina Faso and Togo.

¶3. According to Francois d'Assise Tokpo of the GRAPAD NGO, "Groupe
de Recherche et d'Action pour le Developpement Humain", or Research
and Action Group for Human Development, children, including those
under 10, in the Dassa-Zoume and Savalou regions of Benin, help
their parents crush granite in granite quarries. The granite is
intended for local consumption, especially for road and building
construction.

Agricultural, Fishing, and Food Products

¶4. According to Ako, children living in lakeside areas often engage
in fishing with their parents. Their catches are sold locally.
Children are not involved in sea fishing as this activity requires
endurance.

¶5. According to Tokpo, children are employed in rice plantations to
chase birds from the fields in Dogbo and Deve, in southwestern
Benin. Children from Benin as well as from neighboring countries
including Burkina Faso and Togo work on cotton plantations in the
departments of Colline (central Benin) and Alibori (northwestern
Benin). However, child labor is mostly linked to subsistence farming
in family plantations. The products are sold in local markets and
include cassava, tomato, yam, maize. Beninese children are also
involved in small-scale animal husbandry including the raising of
poultry and rabbits. In northern Benin, children of the Fulani
ethnic group take care of cattle, goats, and sheep. Additionally,
children are used in the production of food products for immediate
consumption across Benin.

BOUSTANI